(b) Additional amenities to be provided at the model stations depend upon the category of the station and these include provision of Retiring room, Waiting room with bathing facilities, Cloak room, Enquiry & Computer based announcement, National Train Enquiry System, Interactive Voice Response System, Public Address System, Book Stalls/ other stalls of essential goods, Refreshment room, Parking/circulating area, Train indicator board, Public phone & internet, Water coollers, Standardised signages, Modular catering stalls, Pay & Use toilets, Self Printing Ticketing Machines/Unreserved Ticketing System and lighting of circulating area.

(c) It has been decided that all stations falling under the category 'A' & 'B' are to be made as model stations.

(d) Raipur and Bilaspur railway stations were declared as model station during the year 1999-2000 and they have already been developed as model stations.

Losses due to delay of Trains

†2069. SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have to bear heavy losses due to delayed running of trains;

(b) the other reasons for delayed running of trains besides natural problems such as fog and agitations; and

(c) the steps taken to ensure timely running of trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Delayed running of trains increases the transit time apart from causing dislocation to the paths of other trains. However, the overall losses incurred by the Railways due to delayed running of trains are not computed and only in specific cases *viz*., breaches, flood etc. when a considerable disruption to through traffic is caused are the losses computed for the given period.

(b) The other reasons for late running of trains on Indian Railways besides fog & agitations are accidents, bundhs, bad weather, alarm chain pulling, miscreant activities, signal failures, over head equipment failures, loco failures, cattle run over, grid failures, human failures etc.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) The following steps are taken by Indian Railways to improve operations and the punctuality of passenger carrying trains;

(1) Intensive, round the clock monitoring of trains at all three levels *viz.* Divisional, Zonal Head Quarters and Railway Board.

(2) Punctuality drives are being conducted from time to time.

(3) Running of trains at maximum permissible speed subject to observance of safety limits and speed restrictions.

(4) Improvements in Time tabling to provide a clear path.

(5) Improvement in standard of maintenance of assets to reduce equipment failures.

(6) Counseling and motivating staff to ensure punctual running.

(7) Liaison with state Government to tackle the Law and Order problems and miscreant activities.

(8) Up-gradation of technology of track, rolling stock and signaling.

(9) To further strengthen the monitoring of punctuality, introduction of Coaching Operations Information System (COIS) has been introduced.

Kollam-Virudhunagar Gauge Conversion Project

2070. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether necessary sanctions have been given to the Kollam-Virudhunagar gauge conversion project;

(b) if so, whether the acquisition of land for the project has been completed and handed over to the Railways;

(c) if so, the status of the work; and

(d) the time by which the project would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Kollam (Quilon)-Virudhunagar is a part of Quilon-Tenkasi-Tirunelveli-Tiruchendur and Tenkasi-Virudhunagar (357 kms) gauge conversion project. Work on Virudhunagar-Tenkasi (121 kms) section has been completed and opened for traffic. Work on Quilon-Tenkasi-Tiruchendur (236 kms) is in various stages of progress.